

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of sealing a reclosable fastener to a substrate which comprises presenting lengths of fastener to a continuous substrate, locating the lengths of fastener on the substrate by first attaching them a flange portion of the fastener to the substrate so as to leave a body portion of the fastener free for movement relative to the substrate, and subsequently passing the combination substrate with the flange portion of the fastener attached and body portion free between a pair of sealing jaws which are dimensioned to be longer than the body of the fastener along the path of movement of the combination and which are displaceable relative to the combination to effect a sealing of the substrate to the fastener body when moved into contact therewith.
2. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1, in which the length dimension of the sealing jaws is such as to form the substrate around the body of the fastener.
3. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, which includes locating the fastener between two substantially parallel webs of material, and initially attaching the lengths of fastener only to the inside of one of said webs of material.
4. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 3, which includes initially attaching the lengths of fastener by means of a single flange extending from one element of the fastener.
5. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, in which the lengths of fastener are presented to the substrate by a cross-web technique.
6. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, in which the body of the fastener comprises two engageable elements, each having an upstanding post at the margin of the fastener which is engageable with a heel of the other element at the opposing

margin of said other element, with the respective posts and heels of the two elements angled at their respective contact surfaces.

7. (Currently Amended) Apparatus for sealing a reclosable fastener to a substrate, comprising means for presenting lengths of fastener to a continuous substrate, means for attaching the lengths of fastener initially through a flange portion of the fastener to the substrate so as to leave a body portion of the fastener free for movement relative to the substrate, and a pair of sealing jaws between which the combination is arranged to pass, said jaws being dimensioned to be longer than the body of the fastener along the path of movement of the combination and being displaceable relative to the combination to effect sealing of the substrate to the fastener body when moved into contact therewith.

8. (Original) Apparatus as claimed in claim 7, in which the lengths of fastener are located between two substantially parallel webs of material, and are initially attached only to the inside of one of said webs of material.

9. (Original) Apparatus as claimed in claim 8, in which the lengths of fastener are initially attached by means of a single flange extending from one element of the fastener.

10. (Previously Presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 7, in which the sealing jaws are preceded in the path of movement by another pair of jaws incorporating means to sever filled and sealed bags.

11. (New) A method of sealing a reclosable fastener to a substrate comprising the steps of

providing a continuous web of a substrate to which a reclosable fastener is to be sealed, wherein said reclosable fastener comprises first and second interengaging profiles, at least one of which comprises a body portion and a flange portion which extends laterally from the body portion;

presenting lengths of said reclosable fastener to said web at one or more locations spaced at predetermined intervals along the length of said web;

locating a length of said reclosable fastener on said web at each said location by attaching said flange portion of said length to said web so as to leave said body portion of said fastener free for movement relative to said web of said substrate, thereby forming a combination of said web with said flange of said length of fastener attached thereto;

passing the combination of said web of said substrate with said fastener lengths attached thereto by said flange portions thereof successively along a predetermined path of movement between a pair of sealing jaws which are dimensioned to be longer than said body portion of said fastener in the direction along said path of movement of said combination and which are displaceable, relative to the combination, to effect a sealing of the substrate to the body portion of said fastener when moved into contact therewith; and

displacing the sealing jaws relative to said web of said substrate, thereby securing said web to said fastener body, thus sealing said fastener to said substrate.

12. (New) Apparatus for sealing a reclosable fastener to a substrate, said reclosable fastener comprising first and second interengaging profiles, at least one of which comprises a body portion and a flange portion which extends laterally from the body portion, said apparatus comprising

means for causing a continuous web of a substrate to which said reclosable fastener is to be sealed to pass along a predetermined path of movement extending along the length of said web;

means for presenting lengths of said reclosable fastener to said web of said substrate at one or more locations spaced at predetermined intervals along the length of said web in the direction of said predetermined path of movement,

means for locating a length of said reclosable fastener on said web at each said location by attaching said flange portion of said length to said web of said substrate so as to leave said body portion of said length of fastener free for movement relative to said web of said substrate, thereby forming a combination of said web with said flange of said fastener attached thereto,

means for passing the combination of said web with said lengths of fastener attached thereto by said flange portions thereof successively along said predetermined path of movement,

DOCKET NO.: THOM-0022 (RA/P301529US)
Application No.: 10/088,042
Office Action Dated: March 11, 2005

**PATENT
REPLY FILED UNDER EXPEDITED
PROCEDURE PURSUANT TO
37 CFR § 1.116**

a pair of sealing jaws which are dimensioned to be longer than said body portion of said fastener in the direction along said path of movement of said combination and between which said predetermined path of movement extends, said sealing jaws and said combination of said fastener lengths and said web of said substrate being displaceable relative to each other to effect a sealing of the substrate to the body portion of said fastener when moved into contact therewith, and

means for displacing said sealing jaws and said web of said substrate relative to each other, thereby securing said web of said substrate to said fastener body, thus sealing said fastener to said substrate.